

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-27 are pending in this application. Claim 21 has been amended to change the dependency to claims 14 or 17.

This Preliminary Amendment makes changes only to the claims and not to the specification. When a Preliminary Amendment refers only to the claims, the Patent Office allows Preliminary Amendments with the filing of applications and does not require a substitute specification. See 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.121(b)(3), 1.121(c), and 1.125. See also "Changes to Support Implementation of the United States Patent and Trademark Office 21st Century Strategic Plan," Final Rule, 69 Fed. Reg. 56482, 56517-18, and 56524 (Sept. 21, 2004). Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that this Preliminary Amendment be accepted on the filing date of the application and entered into the record.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 925-472-5000.

Respectfully submitted,



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